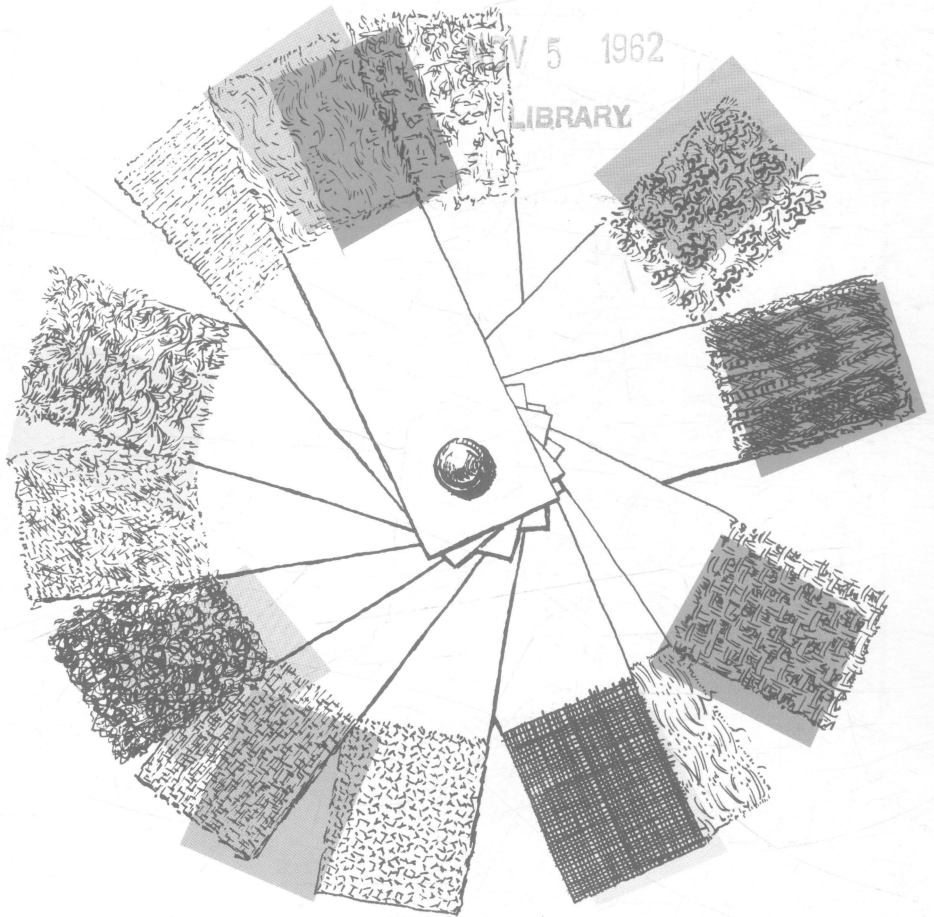


Choosing Your Colors



CHOOSING YOUR COLORS

You develop an appreciation of color by experimenting with it. The more you learn about color, the more pleasure you have in selecting clothes that are in harmony with the color of your skin, hair, and eyes.

This leaflet gives information on:

- Hue — or Color Differences
- Value — or Light and Dark Colors
- Intensity — or Bright and Dull Colors
- Combining Warm and Cool Colors
- Combining Light and Dark Colors
- Combining Bright and Dull Colors
- What is Your Personal Coloring?
- What Colors Can You Wear?
- How Much Contrast Do You Need?
- How Bright Should They Be?
- Guides for Combining Colors
- Becoming Colors
- Tips on Choosing Colors
- Optional Followups

HUE--OR COLOR DIFFERENCES

A widely accepted theory of color is based on the idea that all colors are derived from the three primary colors – red, yellow, and blue – and that all other colors come from mixtures of these three.

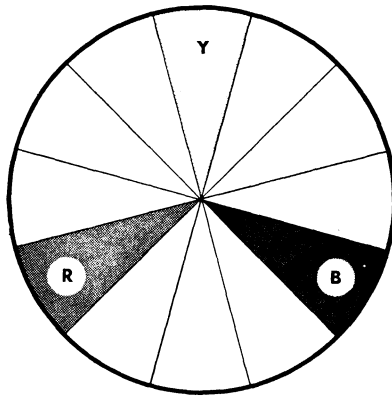


Figure 1. Primary colors

Secondary colors are produced by mixing:

Red with Yellow to make Orange

Yellow with Blue to make Green

Blue with Red to make Purple

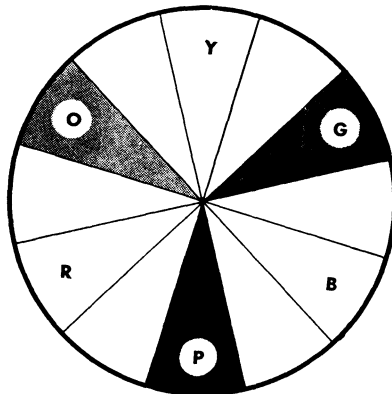


Figure 2. Secondary colors

Further mixing of neighboring primary and secondary colors produces many other colors or color gradations. "Mixed" colors, then, can be considered as relatives, since they have common ancestors.

Within any family of colors there can be both light and dark, as well as bright and dull colors. For example: Brown and beige can be closely related to the same orange or yellow-red family, with the brown being a dark, dull orange and the beige a light, dull orange. Chartreuse or yellow-green could be placed with either the yellow or the green family. Turquoise and blue-green could be considered with the blue or the green family.

Thinking about colors around you and where they might be placed on a color wheel will help you see color relationships. You will note that any "mixed" color fits into a color wheel according to the amount of yellow, red, or blue that it contains.

WARM OR COOL COLORS

Colors are considered warm if they contain enough yellow or yellow-red. See Figure 3.

Colors are considered cool if they contain a noticeable quantity of blue. See Figure 4.

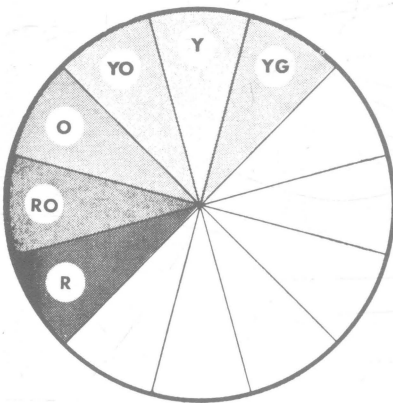


Figure 3. Warm colors

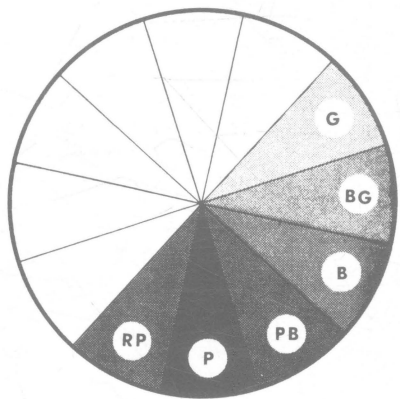


Figure 4. Cool colors

Even though red is classified with the warm colors (Figure 3), pure red when mixed with yellow has an additional link to the entire group of warm colors. On the other hand, when pure red is mixed with blue, it acquires a relationship with the cool colors.

Besides recognizing the obviously warm or cool colors, you can see that there are warm and cool versions in each color family. Orange-red is the warm version of red, and purple-red or bluish-red is the cool version of red. Aqua is an example of a warm version of a cool color because some yellow had to be mixed with the predominantly blue color. Another example: Yellow-green is the warm version of green, and blue-green is the cool version of green.

CONTRASTING OR RELATED COLORS

Color combinations can be **contrasting** or **related** according to their placement on a color wheel.

Contrasting colors are those that lie some distance apart on a color wheel.

Related colors are those that lie side by side or near one another on a color wheel.

Examples of contrasting colors

Warm colors as a group lie opposite the cool colors on a color wheel (see Figures 3 and 4). Any combination of warm and cool colors, therefore, could be considered **contrasting**.

Two colors opposite one another on the color wheel, besides being called contrasting, are called complements or **complementary** colors (see Figure 5).

Colors that form a triangle on a color wheel are called a **triad** as well as contrasting (see Figure 6).

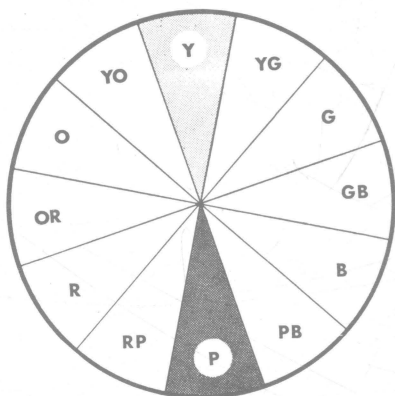


Figure 5. Complementary colors

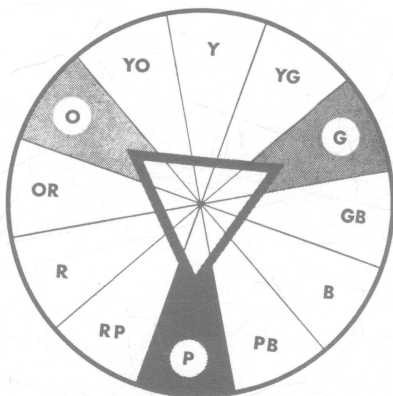


Figure 6. Triad colors



Figure 7. One-color combinations

Examples of related colors

Related colors always contain a common color. These include one-color combinations (see Figure 7), or colors that lie side by side or near one another on the color wheel (see Figure 8). Since colors containing some blue are considered cool—the neighboring colors shown in Figure 8 are a **cool** combination of **related** colors. If you choose colors from the warm side of the color wheel, and if these colors contain some yellow, you will have a **warm** combination of **related** colors.

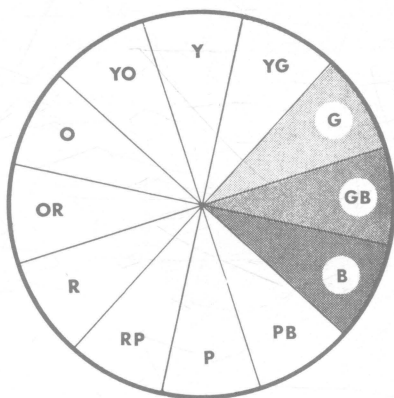
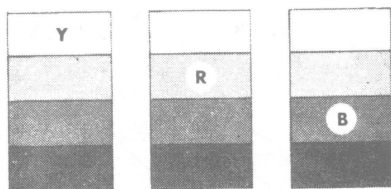


Figure 8. Neighboring colors

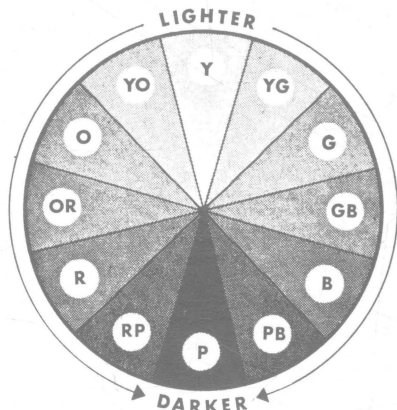
VALUE--OR LIGHT AND DARK COLORS



You have a choice within each color family from light to dark colors.

Figure 9. Light and dark values of primary color families

COLORS FOLLOW A NATURAL ORDER FROM LIGHT TO DARK



In a rainbow, warm yellow is the lightest color. Yellow-red or orange is somewhat darker. The cool blues and purples are darkest of all. Therefore, we can say that **warm colors are lighter than cool colors in their natural order from light to dark.** See Figure 10.

Figure 10. Warm colors are lighter than cool colors

INTENSITY-- OR BRIGHT AND DULL COLORS

Let us now consider the brightness and dullness of colors within color families. It is easy to see the difference between a bright orange and dull brown, tan, or beige — or the difference between vivid red and dull maroon. It is sometimes more difficult to recognize that a dusty pink is duller than a clear, fresh pink. We must remember that there can be both light and dark colors in a bright or vivid group of colors, and light and dark colors in a dull or subdued group of colors.

COMBINING WARM AND COOL COLORS

We may say that warm colors make cool ones seem cooler, just as cool colors make warm ones seem warmer. When we put contrasting colors together each seems more intense. Complementary colors, the extreme of contrasting colors, make each other look brightest. For example, bright yellow and bright purple would make eye-catching school colors because the colors would intensify each other.

The duller a color becomes, however, the less power it has to make its complement look brighter. A dull color is more likely to emphasize, through repetition, other colors related to it. For example, a golden blonde with creamy skin tones might choose to wear caramel color, thinking it would make her eyes appear more blue. But if the caramel coloring were very subdued, it might emphasize her hair and skin by repetition instead of her eyes by contrast.

A color combination that expresses primarily either warmth or coolness will have unity.

Try combinations:

Using equal amounts of warm and cool color.

Using unequal amounts of warm and cool color.

An example of almost equal amounts of warm and cool colors in a costume would be a blue skirt worn with a gold blouse and jacket. An example of unequal amounts of warm and cool colors would be a skirt and jacket of two tones of blue worn with a pale gold scarf.

Usually unequal amounts of warm and cool colors are most pleasing because the color combination will have a unified idea of either warmth or coolness.

COMBINING LIGHT AND DARK COLORS

Try combinations using only light colors. Example: Pale blue with pale lavender. Use only dark colors together, too. Example: Navy with maroon. You will see that **some contrast of light and dark in a color scheme is needed**. Example: Pale blue with deep violet is more interesting than the pale blue and pale lavender. Navy combined with coral rather than maroon gives the needed contrast of light and dark.

After trying some combinations, you will see that **strong light and dark contrasts are the most striking**. For example: Light cream with dark brown is more striking than dark tan with medium brown.

You can make pleasing combinations by keeping the natural order in mind and **combining a lighter warm color with a darker cool color**. For instance, a gray-beige combines with purple better than rich golden brown with pale lavender. Bright green with navy blue is a more appealing combination than dark forest green with pale blue.

COMBINING BRIGHT AND DULL COLORS

Try combining only bright, vivid colors: A glittery blue pin worn with a bright fuschia dress, for example. Try combining only soft subdued colors: A soft lavender-pink dress, mauve-colored scarf, and plum-colored belt would be one possibility.

Colors go together well when the quality of brightness is nearly the same.

Brighter color combinations look gay, and duller ones soft and restful. Some of the very dull color combinations may appear even somber or drab.

Combine a bright accent color with a dull-colored costume. **A small amount of bright color used with subdued color can improve a color scheme**. An example would be a narrow persimmon-colored velvet ribbon accent on a taupe-brown hat.

If too much bright color is used, dull colors look even duller. For instance, a clear, bright chartreuse blouse worn with a dusty pink suit will make the suit look dull and dirty.

WHAT IS YOUR PERSONAL COLORING?

Hue

Your personal coloring has a “color family” origin. Do you recognize the color families to which your hair color, skin color, and eye color belong?

Can you decide if your personal coloring of hair, skin, and eyes forms a **contrasting** or **related** color combination?

There are warmer or cooler versions in personal coloring. For example: The combination of a deep sun-tanned skintone, brown eyes, and brown hair is a consistent warm theme. The combination of a light pink and white skin, blue eyes, and blue-black hair (or white hair) is a consistent cool theme.

The skin tones of most women fall somewhere between these two examples. Skin tones can be made to appear warmer by wearing orange-red lipstick or cooler by wearing purple-red lipstick.

Analyze your own costume for equal and unequal amounts of warm and cool colors. Is there a unified effect between your personal coloring and the color in your clothes?

Value

Is your personal coloring composed of **sharp contrasts** between light and dark or of **close values**?

Intensity

Personal coloring, too, can range from vivid to subdued. An example of a vivid blonde is one with golden blonde hair, deep blue eyes, and light creamy skin. An example of a blonde with subdued coloring is one with ash-blond hair, gray eyes, and a pale, delicate skin. Personal coloring that has strong contrast of light and dark may also be considered vivid. An example of this type of vividness is a person with very black hair, white skin, and dark blue eyes.

Is your personal coloring vivid or subdued, or between these two extremes?

WHAT COLORS CAN YOU WEAR?

Consider the quality of warmth or coolness of the color.

Repetition

You can emphasize warm skin tones by wearing related warm, earthy colors that repeat the warm theme.

Often close gradations produce unusually beautiful effects.

You can emphasize cool skin tones by wearing dark, cool colors that repeat the cool theme.

Related colors can create rhythmic vibrating effects.



Contrast

It is possible to emphasize warm coloring by wearing contrasting dark, bright cool colors. For example: Blue-greens bring out rosy tones in one's skin.

Blue-greens are considered becoming to many people. But we must also remember that, since complementary colors emphasize each other, a bright purple dress can make the skin tone appear more yellow.

You can emphasize cool coloring by wearing light, warm colors.

A person with blue-black hair, white skin, and deep blue eyes might emphasize the coolness of her coloring by wearing pale greenish-yellow.



Do the colors you are wearing emphasize your coloring by repetition or by contrast?

HOW MUCH CONTRAST DO YOU NEED?

Make the best use of value contrast in the clothes you wear.



To emphasize personal coloring, try light colors. Very light colors may seem to add color and enhance the complexion and hair of some people. Others will find pastels dilute their own coloring.



Try dark colors to make skin appear lighter. Light hair and skin can be made more dramatic by wearing black or a very dark color, which enhances this paleness.



Strong contrast between dark hair and light skin is emphasized by wearing very light or very dark colors in clothes.



A lack of contrast between hair and skin can be supplemented by wearing various close gradations of light and dark contrasts in clothes.

Example: A blonde with light skin and light hazel eyes has little contrast. A costume combining tones from creamy beige to caramel color would relate to and yet supplement her own coloring.



As a rule, when you wear cool colors, those that are somewhat darker than your skin tone will be most becoming.

HOW BRIGHT SHOULD THEY BE?

Make harmonious use of the degree of brightness.

The vividness of your own coloring can be your guide to many colors that repeat the degree of vividness of your personal coloring in your clothes.



To emphasize personal coloring, try vivid colors with vivid coloring, and try "mixed" colors that are somewhat subdued with more subdued personal coloring.

You will find that softer, more subdued colors tend to give more beauty and are kinder to older faces.



Bright, pure colors are usually more difficult to wear, except by the very young.

You can emphasize personal coloring by wearing small amounts of brighter color accents.

Try a brighter accent color to enrich subdued coloring. Example: An all yellow-beige costume worn by an ash blonde may be made more interesting by the addition of a red-orange scarf. Remember, a small amount of bright color seems to balance a larger amount of dull color. Even though a woman with pale, delicate coloring in hair, skin, and eyes might look lovely wearing ruby earrings, an entire red costume might seem to overpower her.



Another way to accent vivid personal coloring is by wearing neutrals or subdued colors.

For example: Vivid red hair might seem to be the accent color when an all-beige costume was worn.



GUIDES FOR COMBINING COLORS

A color combination that expresses primarily either warmth or coolness will have unity.

Warm and cool colors in unequal amounts are more pleasing than equal amounts.

Colors go together pleasingly if the quality of brightness is nearly the same.

A small amount of bright color used with dull color can improve a color scheme.

Some contrast of light and dark in a color scheme is needed.

Strong dark and light contrasts are the most striking.

Warm colors are lighter than cool colors in their natural order from light to dark. You can make pleasing combinations by combining a lighter warm color with a darker cool color.

BECOMING COLORS

Becoming colors are those that do pleasant things to your personal coloring of skin, hair, and eyes. For example: A becoming color is one that —

Helps your skin look clear and healthy.

Brings out highlights and sheen of your hair.

Makes your eyes appear more interesting.

You should be able to find becoming colors in each color group or family. By trying different colors, you will learn your most becoming ones.

TIPS ON CHOOSING COLORS

Hue: What colors can you wear?

To emphasize through repetition, wear: Dark, cool colors to repeat cool skin tones. Warm, earthy colors to repeat warm skin tones.

To emphasize through contrast, wear: Light, warm colors if you have cool coloring. Dark, bright, cool colors if you have warm coloring.

Remember that blue-greens bring out rosy tones in one's skin and are becoming to many people.

Value: How light or dark should your colors be?

Very light or very dark colors in clothes will emphasize strong contrasts between hair and skin.

Close gradations of light and dark, rather than dramatic contrasts in clothes, will supplement a lack of contrast between hair and skin. A light blonde with pale skin or a medium blonde with suntanned skin are examples.

When you wear cool colors, those that are somewhat darker than the skin tone will usually be more becoming.

Intensity: How bright should your colors be?

The vividness of your own coloring is a guide to many harmonious colors. Softer, more subdued colors, are kind to older faces.

Small amounts of bright color accent can be used to emphasize personal coloring.

Vivid personal coloring becomes the accent when neutral or subdued colors are worn.

OPTIONAL FOLLOWUPS

Experiment with colors and make a chart of becoming colors. Mount these for a personal color wheel to carry in your purse.

If you wear lipstick, experiment with different lipsticks to decide what color is most becoming. Lipstick colors range from orange-red to true red to purple-red. They come in light, medium, or dark tones, as well as bright and subdued tones.

Try changes of accessories for one of your dresses or suits.

Make a color plan for your wardrobe for the coming season.

Make a color plan for clothes you plan to buy soon.

Wear a planned color scheme which applies color principles.

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